



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to Participate in StartUP PGH

*Administrator Jonathan Morrison and Senior Technical Leadership to Engage
Regional Autonomous Vehicle and AI Ecosystem During Multi-Day Visit*

PITTSBURGH, PA – The Allegheny Conference on Community Development announced today that National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Administrator Jonathan Morrison, accompanied by a delegation of senior NHTSA leadership and technical experts, will travel to the Pittsburgh region from September 15–17 to participate in StartUP PGH.

"Pittsburgh has a unique blend of world-renowned academic research, specialized testing facilities like PennSTART, and an unrivaled density of autonomous vehicle companies that makes our region a natural destination for federal safety leaders," said Matt Smith, Chief Growth Officer of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development. "We are thrilled to welcome Administrator Morrison and the NHTSA leadership team to StartUP PGH as we collaborate on the future of safe, automated transportation."

The three-day immersive visit will highlight Southwestern Pennsylvania's global leadership in autonomous vehicle innovation, artificial intelligence, robotics, transportation technology, and public safety. The NHTSA leadership delegation includes key agency directors, policy advisors, and research leads across vehicle safety research, crash avoidance, human factors, and automation safety.

"Pittsburgh has become a nationally recognized leader in artificial intelligence, autonomous technology, and robotics, and that's apparent at RIDC's Mill 19 and Westmoreland Innovation Center," said RIDC President Donald F. Smith, Jr. "This NHTSA visit is an opportunity to show how Southwestern Pennsylvania is become a powerhouse in these high-growth industries."

Throughout the visit, NHTSA officials will experience firsthand the world-class testing assets, research institutions, and industry pioneers that position Pittsburgh as a national Center for Excellence in Vehicle Automation. Key to that experience is a visit to advanced testing environments, including the PennSTART site at the RIDC Westmoreland Innovation Center in Mt. Pleasant.

Tim White, PennSTART Chair and RIDC Senior Vice President, added: "The PennSTART shared 2-mile test track and training facility in Westmoreland is attracting interest from innovative companies from our region and beyond. It reflects the input of industry leaders and transportation experts on tech development as well as safety. It will be a state-of-the-art regional differentiator and business attraction asset, as well as a training facility for first responders."

The high-level itinerary also includes:

- **Ecosystem Demonstrations & Briefings:** Engagement with Pittsburgh's premier autonomous technology companies and innovators demonstrating cutting-edge autonomous systems and safety solutions.
- **Academic & Safety Research:** Research briefings and facility tours with Carnegie Mellon University, including the Manufacturing Futures Institute, and the Robotics Innovation Center.

- **Stakeholder & Public Engagement:** Participation in major StartUP PGH events, including Pittsburgh Robotics Discovery Day, local leadership briefings, an Allegheny Conference reception, and more.

Start UP PGH is a community-led initiative that celebrates entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, and investment across the Pittsburgh region. Taking place September 14–18, 2026, this decentralized, week-long event brings together startups, investors, researchers, students, corporations, and community leaders through a diverse calendar of events designed to spark connections, showcase innovation, and accelerate opportunity.

For more information on StartUP PGH, visit startuppgh.com.

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About the Allegheny Conference

The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and its affiliate organizations—the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, and the Pennsylvania Economy League—work together to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in the 10-county southwestern Pennsylvania region. For more information, visit alleghenyconference.org.

For media inquiries, please contact:

Amie M. Downs
412.901.9272
adowns@alleghenyconference.org